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**CHEVY CHASE VILLAGE  
BOARD OF MANAGERS  
JULY 13, 2015 MEETING**

**STAFF REPORT**

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**TO:** BOARD OF MANAGERS  
**FROM:** SHANA R. DAVIS-COOK, VILLAGE MANAGER   
**DATE:** 6/4/2015  
**SUBJECT:** TREE PLANTING PROGRAM—NATIVE TREE POLICY

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**Background**

In response to recent concerns regarding the use of tree and plant species native to the eastern forest in the landscaping that surrounds the Village Hall, the Village's Tree Committee held a joint meeting in mid-June with the Environment & Energy and Parks & Greenspaces Committees to discuss a potential policy as it relates to the Village's tree planting program in rights-of-way and parks. Board Chair Michael Denger and Vice Chair Elissa Leonard attended as well.

There was a lengthy discussion about the factors that should be considered when determining an appropriate species for a particular site. The attached draft policy reflects the points that were agreed to by the committee. The policy was forwarded to all attendees of the joint committee meeting, and the co-chairs of the three committees were asked to forward the policy to their respective committee's members.

It is important to note that the Tree Committee has essentially been operating pursuant to this policy for some time, but establishment of a written policy provides useful clarification and direction when making future decisions.

**Board Action Requested**

As this policy is proposed to serve as the basis for the Village's tree planting program, Board approval is necessary.

**Draft Motion**

I move to APPROVE/DENY the proposed Native Tree Planting Policy

- AS DRAFTED
- WITH THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENTS \_\_\_\_\_.

**Attachments**

Native Tree Planting Policy (draft)  
Comments from Ms. Susie Eig (West Kirke Street)

# **Native Tree Planting Policy**

*Draft 7/2015*

The Parks & Greenspaces, Environment & Energy and Tree Committees held a joint meeting on June 18, 2015 to discuss the Village's Right-of-Way and Park Tree Planting Program and the use of native species in the implementation of this program.

All in attendance agreed that species native to the Eastern forest are important to the eco-system and help to sustain local wildlife, including birds and beneficial insects. It also was recognized that the Village's use of native species in its planting program would serve as an example and encouragement for residents to do the same on their property.

After a thorough discussion, those in attendance agreed to the following general principles in determining trees and plants that will be planted by the Village:

1. Tree species that are native to the Eastern forest will normally be used, recognizing that non-native species and cultivars of native trees may be appropriate in certain circumstances (i.e., when seeking to maximize canopy under utility wires (e.g., London Plane vis-à-vis the more disease prone American Sycamore, etc.)). Whenever they are practicable in the circumstances, canopy trees that are deciduous hardwoods that reach a minimum mature height of forty (40) feet shall be used.
2. If a resident requests planting of a non-native species in the right-of-way adjacent to their home, representatives from the Tree and/or Environment & Energy Committee will contact the resident to understand the attributes the resident seeks in the non-native species and to inform the resident of native alternatives that might provide the same benefits (i.e., spring flowering, autumn color, foliage/canopy spread, etc.).
3. When replacing a non-native tree required to be removed, the Tree Committee will determine if there are benefits to maintaining the non-native species, including right-of-way aesthetics (such as maintaining an existing line of Cherry trees), space allocations, abutting resident requests, and lack of appropriate native alternatives, which outweigh the advantages of shifting to a native species on the site.
4. When selecting species, Village staff should not be limited to its primary nursery source, but will work with the Village Arborist to locate cost-effective native species from other area nurseries, provided these sources are not substantially more expensive.

Additionally, the committees will work to improve education campaigns regarding the availability and benefits of using native species in private landscapes.

**Davis-Cook, Shana**

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**From:** Susie Eig <susieeig@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 09, 2015 2:04 AM  
**To:** Davis-Cook, Shana  
**Cc:** Eig Susie  
**Subject:** Revised Comments on Draft Native Tree Planting Policy  
**Attachments:** Draft Native Tree Planting Policy-comments copy#2.pages.zip

Dear Shana, please share my revised draft Tree Planting policy with all of the Board Members for their review in advance of discussion at the July Board Meeting. If the copy comes through as written, the three points of actual policy will be in bold and my additional comments will be seen in italics. The object was to create something easy to understand and easy to follow, something that allows flexibility but defines a goal. Please let the members of the Board know that if they wish to discuss this draft policy with me in advance of the meeting to contact me via email.

Thank you very much.

Best regards,

Susie

## Native Tree Planting Policy

**1. Deciduous hardwood tree species, native to the Eastern forest, that reach a minimum height of forty feet shall always be preferred. Cultivars of such native trees or native trees that reach a lesser height will have preferred status if they are recognized as offering solutions to specific site problems or disease resistance. Such status should be reviewed regularly to keep up with current research.**

*All street trees should be suitable for arborizing -removing branches from the lower trunk to a level that permits, on the curb side, safe passage of vehicles, including even trash trucks and moving vans, and on the sidewalk side (if there is a sidewalk), pedestrians. Trees should be maintained from the time of installation to allow safe passage of both vehicles and pedestrians. Branch trimming and removal should recognize and accommodate the drooping of branches after heavy rains, snow or ice. Such preventive measures increase visibility and safety for all and protect and enhance the health of the tree. Arborizing street side should be to a minimum of twelve feet above the street level.*

*All street tree selections should be made after careful analysis of the site. Such site analysis should include noting:*

- A. Whether there are overhead wires and if there are, how high they are above ground*
- B. Whether there is a sidewalk, and if there is, the width of the green strip between sidewalk and curb,*
- C. Proximity of the proposed site to a street corner, official signage, fire hydrant, underground utility lines, driveway, residential front walk, fencing etc.*
- D. Proximity and nature of other plantings and ordinal locations of those plantings in relation to the proposed tree (where shade will be cast and how dense it might be)*

**2. Resident requests for specific native or non-native tree selections should be considered carefully and each resident request should be given equal consideration. Preference should be given to deciduous hardwood species that reach a minimum of forty feet in height and can be arborized to a height high enough to permit safe passage of pedestrians and trucks. Cultivars or trees that reach a lesser height should be considered carefully if they are recognized as offering solutions to specific site problems or disease resistance.**

*A library of reference books on native and non-native trees should be maintained at the Village Office and a list of recommended web sites maintained on the Village's own website.*

*Representatives from the Tree and/or Environment & Energy Committee may not have all answers to resident questions at their fingertips. Many residents have used or are using professional landscape designers to whom they may be able to turn for guidance and understanding, but perhaps the members of the Tree & E&E Committees could work together to prepare an information paper that could be handed out or mailed to residents and their landscape designers and contractors so that they would all receive standardized information to which Village staff could refer. That would ensure that everyone involved would be basing comments and practices on the same information and standards.*

**#3 should be omitted.**

**(4.) Village staff should not be limited to a primary nursery source, but should explore and/or have the arborist and/or the Tree, Parks & Green Spaces, and Environment & Energy Committees explore alternative sources in order to obtain the best possible purchase, balancing quality and price and reducing the number of trees planted rather than compromising quality, selection or appropriate maintenance of existing trees.**

